

Guidelines for New Construction

Note:

Examples of compatible new construction in other historic districts are provided to illustrate the design principles of this chapter.

Chapter 2:

Design Guidelines for New Construction

These design principles apply to all new construction projects and renovations to noncontributing buildings in the Old Town District. New buildings and additions should not imitate historic buildings, but should be compatible with them. Creativity in new design is especially encouraged when it also is compatible with the design goals of the district. Note, that designs that are incompatible with the district may be more appropriately located elsewhere.

Many opportunities exist for infill in the district and the manner in which these new structures are designed can substantially affect the district. It is important that new construction be designed such that it will not impede one's ability to interpret the historic character of the area. Therefore, the design of new construction is very important and should be carefully considered. In general, new buildings should be compatible with their historic context, but should be distinguishable as being new such that one can "read" the evolution of the area. These design guidelines that follow focus on the fundamental features of traditional building in Old Town that should be respected in order to be compatible with the historic context.



Before: New buildings should be compatible with the historic context. Creative new design is especially encouraged that is compatible with the design goals of the district. Here, a vacant lot awaits compatible infill in the Old Town District of Ft. Collins, Colorado. (See below.)



After: Simplified interpretations of traditional building elements, including a transparent first floor with display windows and an ornamental cornice, help this new building fit into its historic context.



Contemporary interpretations of traditional buildings, which are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, are strongly encouraged. (Lower Downtown, Denver, CO).



Orient a new building parallel to its lot lines, in a manner similar to historic building orientation, not at an angle.



Floor-to-floor heights should appear to be similar to those seen historically in the block. (Lower Downtown, Denver, CO).

Architectural Character

- 43. The literal imitation of older historic styles is discouraged.**
- Contemporary interpretations of traditional buildings, which are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, are strongly encouraged.

Site Plan Guidelines

- 44. Respect the Old Town street grid in new construction.**
- Orient a new building parallel to its lot lines, in a manner similar to historic building orientation, not at an angle.
 - Orient the primary facade toward the street.
- 45. Maintain the uniform alignment of facades.**
- Align the building front at the street edge.

Mass and Scale

- 46. New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to historic structures found traditionally in the area.**
- 47. Floor-to-floor heights should appear to be similar to those seen historically in the block.**
- In particular, the first floor should appear similar in height to those seen traditionally.

Roof Shape

- 48. The roof of a new building should be visually compatible by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings.**

Windows

- 49. Upper story windows with vertical emphasis are encouraged.**
- 50. Windows should be trimmed with painted wood or anodized metal.**
- This trim should have a dimension similar to that used historically.
- 51. Window dimensions that are similar to those used traditionally are encouraged.**
- If they are used, the dividing frame elements, or muntins, in a window should be similar in dimension to those used traditionally.
- 52. Windows on lower floors should appear to have divided lights.**
- Pedestrians can more easily see the details on windows closer to the street and can discern the shadow line created by true divided lights. Using true divided lights is thereby encouraged on lower story windows.
 - Snap-in muntins, used on both sides of the glass, may also be considered.



The roof of a new building should be visually compatible by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings.



Upper story windows with vertical emphasis are encouraged on new buildings. Note also the reinterpretation of traditional cornice moldings on this infill structure.



Doors should be trimmed with wood, painted metal or anodized aluminum. This trim should have a dimension similar to that used historically.



Building entrances should appear similar to those used historically. This new storefront appears as a loading dock door might with its large sheets of glass and large opening. (Lower Downtown, Denver, CO).

Entries

- 53. Building entrances should appear similar to those used historically.**
- Building entrances should be in scale with the overall facade.
 - Locate the primary entrance facing the street.
 - Contemporary interpretations of building entries, which are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, are encouraged.
- 54. Doors should be trimmed with wood, painted metal or anodized aluminum.**
- This trim should have a dimension similar to that used historically.



Contemporary interpretations of traditional details, which are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, are strongly encouraged.

Loading Docks and Doors

- 55. New construction should incorporate loading docks similar to those seen traditionally.**
- Many older warehouses are introducing pedestrian related uses and are incorporating such elements as outdoor seating on the loading docks. In order for new construction to relate to its context, it should find similar uses for a loading dock element.
- 56. Openings similar in size and depth to loading dock doors should be incorporate in new construction.**
- This will help the infill structure to be visually compatible with its older neighbors.
 - Contemporary interpretations of loading docks doors, which are similar in scale and overall character to those seen historically, are encouraged.



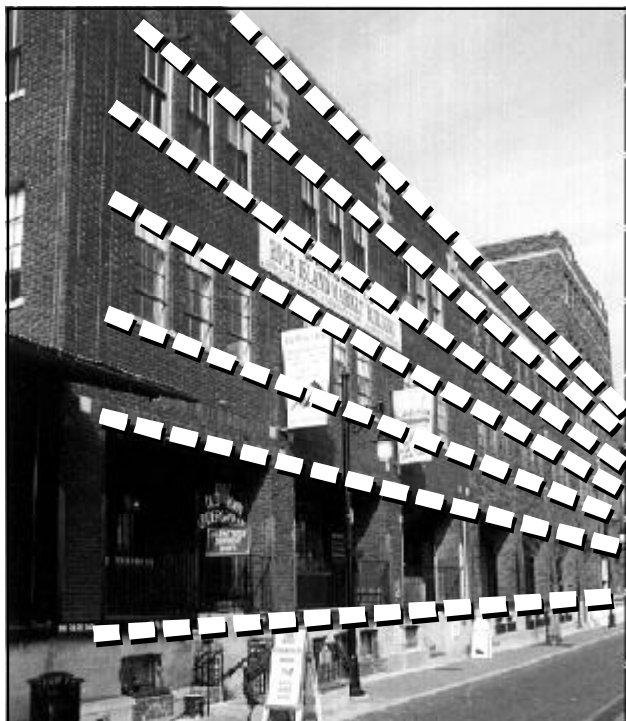
New construction should incorporate loading docks similar to those seen traditionally. A poured concrete loading dock with a railing is appropriate.

Materials

- 57. Simple material finishes are encouraged.**
- Matte finishes are preferred.
 - Polished stone, for example, is inappropriate.
- 58. Materials should appear similar to those used historically.**
- Traditional materials are preferred, primarily red brick.
 - Do not employ “used” brick in new construction. This can give a false impression of the building’s history.
 - New, state-of-the-art materials may be considered for limited applications. New materials should have a demonstrated durability in this environment.



Materials should appear similar to those used historically, as do the materials in this new building.



Maintain the alignment of horizontal elements along the block, including building cornices.

Solid-to-void Ratio

- 59. The ratio of window-to-wall should be similar to that seen traditionally on warehouses or commercial storefront buildings in the district.**

Alignment of Facade Elements

- 60. Maintain the alignment of horizontal elements along the block, including building cornices.**
- Window sills, moldings and cornices are among those elements that may be seen to align.